

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT PASS GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: CONVERSATION WITH DUFF

1. MINISTER AND EMBASSY OFFICER DECEMBER 3 CALLED TONY DUFF AND PATRICK LAVER. DUFF BELIEVES THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF RESTRICTED ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS HAVE GONE REASONABLY WELL. THE NATIONALISTS HAVE STARTED TO COME OUT WITH THEIR OWN IDEAS ON AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND TO QUESTION EACH OTHER ABOUT ITS STRUCTURE. DUFF HOPES THIS SORT OF GIVE-AND-TAKE AMONG THE BLACK DELEGATES MIGHT MOVE THEM CLOSER TO A BROAD, COMMON AFRICAN POSITION. THE WHITES HAVE REMAINED CONTROLLED IN THE SESSIONS DESPITE MUGABE'S OCCASIONAL ABUSES. DUFF MENTIONED THAT THE CROSLAND STATEMENT OF DECEMBER 2 HOLDING OUT THE PROSPECT OF A BRITISH ROLE DURING THE TRANSITION HAS ADDED A "PINCH OF SALT TO THE TALKS", ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH HAVE NOT YET HAD ANY REACTIONS TO THE STATEMENT FROM EITHER THE NATIONALISTS OR THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS.

2. DUFF FORESEES DISCUSSIONS CONTINUING OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS CENTERING ON THE FORM OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND, INCIDENTALLY, ON THE NATURE OF THE BRITISH ROLE. ASKED TO SPECULATE HOW ANNEX C WILL FARE AS THE

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LUJYE PROGRESSES, DUFF SAID THERE REMAINS A GOOD

CHANCE THAT SOMETHING RESEMBLING ANNEX C COULD EMERGE. THE BRITISH ROLE IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER (SUCH AS A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER AND PRIVY COUNCIL) OUGHT TO SATISFY THE TWO-TIER CONCEPT. EMBASSY OFFICER SUGGESTED THAT A TWO-TIER GOVERNMENT THAT WAS PRIMARILY BLACK AND BRITISH WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, SATISFY THE POWER-SHARING CONCEPT. DUFF AGREED, ADDING THAT IT "IS AXIOMATIC THAT THERE MUST BE POWER SHARING." THE QUESTION IS THE DEGREE TO WHICH POWER IS SHARED BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES AND IN THIS RESPECT, THE CONFERENCE MIGHT COME OUT WITH SOMETHING LESS THAN ENVISAGED IN ANNEX C. DUFF SAID THAT THE UPPER TIER MIGHT NOT HAVE PARITY (HE MENTIONED A FOUR-TO-TWO SPLIT AS AN EXAMPLE) BUT A BRITISH CHAIRMANSHIP COULD COMPENSATE. THE BRITISH MIGHT ALSO CHAIR A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WHICH WOULD SERVE AS A COMPROMISE ON THE QUESTION OF SECURITY PORTFOLIOS, ALTHOUGH THIS ISSUE WILL LEAD TO DIFFICULT BARGAINING. DUFF MENTIONED AS WELL THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE NATIONALIST LEADERS MIGHT SIT IN THE UPPER TIER (AND PERHAPS IN THE LOWER BUT WITHOUT PORTFOLIOS) WHICH COULD LESSEN THE IMPORTANCE OF WHO WOULD BE PRIME MINISTER. ALL THESE POSSIBILITIES DEPEND, HOWEVER, ON WHETHER ELEMENTS IN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ARE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE OR ARE SIMPLY SEEKING A GOOD ISSUE ON WHICH TO BREAK UP THE TALKS.

3. WITHOUT REFERRING TO THE REINHARDT-RICHARD CONVERSATION (GENEVA 9577), THE MINISTER ASKED WHETHER DUFF FORESAW A NEED TO APPROACH THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS TO REMIND THEM THAT POWER-SHARING IS THE UNDERLYING CONCEPT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. DUFF ANSWERED THAT AT SOME POINT WE WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE TO LEAN ON THE PRESIDENTS AGAIN AND THE U.S. WOULD HAVE TO BE TOUGH WITH SMITH AGAIN, BUT AN APPROACH DOES NOT SEEM NECESSARY NOW. (ALTHOUGH WE CONTINUED SOME DISCUSSION ALONG THIS LINE, IT WAS APPARENT FROM DUFF'S REMARKS THAT THE BRITISH DELEGATION HAS NOT REPORTED ON THE REINHARDT-RICHARD CONVERSATION. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF LETTERS AND NO SENSE OF URGENCY.)

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4. DUFF SAID THERE HAS AS YET BEEN NO INDICATION WHAT IMPACT THE NEW ZIPA GROUP FROM MAPUTO MIGHT HAVE ON THE CONFERENCE. HE NOTED THE PRESENCE OF REX NHONGO, SAYING THAT HE, AS A NON-KARANGA AND A FIELD COMMANDER, STOOD SOMEWHAT APART FROM HIS ZIPA COLLEAGUES IN GENEVA. DUFF SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A SPLIT IN ZIPA BETWEEN THE REAL FIGHTERS, SUCH AS NHONGO, AND THE LUSAKA-BASED PSEUDO-SOLDIERS SUCH AS TONGOGARA.

ARMSTRONG

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